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ABSTRACT

The authors of this report comment on several aspects of the relationships between the experiences, educational philosophy, leadership style, and professional behavior of a reform-minded urban school principal in Ontario (Canada). The paper discusses a number of observed and reported activities of the principal, including his behavior when introducing the researchers to his school, his reports of a previous principalship, and his response to a crisis in school-community relations. The researchers conclude that while perhaps appearing arbitrary to outsiders, the principal's actions and the environment in which he chose to act were "minded" expressions of his experience-based and image-related personal philosophy (a form of personal practical knowledge), and whether conscious or not served to support and enhance acceptance by others of his approach to schooling. (PGD)

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Personal Practical Knowledge at Bay Street School (1)

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PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

We, like other members on this panel, were brought to our present inquiry by a commitment to school reform. We acknowledge the existing theoretical and practical predominance of logistic concepts utilized in school reform. Our position is that logistic concepts of reform have foundered because this theory practice paradigm, in all its modified forms, compels the subjugation and adaptation of teachers' practical knowledge to the theoretical understandings contained in the reforming agents' perspective.(2) We were encouraged by NIE's search for new ways of conceptualizing this problem.

We have formulated our inquiry from the point of view of schools and teachers. Our perspective is, therefore, not that of a reforming agent. We do not intend to claim that our research will lead to more effective reform agent strategies. We do believe our research participation in schooling will contribute to the minded practical life(3) of participating practitioners. We also believe that our general understanding of practical knowledge will contribute to the literature on 'knowledge use and school improvement' and, hence, to school reform.

Our special interest in the practical is with the personal. We want to understand and conceptualize the nature, origin and expression of a practitioner's metaphors,

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images, rules and principles which we envision as components of his personal-practical knowledge.[4] Our accounts and understanding of the expressions of personal knowledge in the minded practices of schools: its rhythms, such as those contained in the movement from kindergarten to grade 12; from September to June; and from opening bell to dismissal at day's end: its rituals such as those contained in opening exercises, staff meetings and the stating of individual and school philosophies: its habitual actions expressed in subject-matter organization, marking, testing, seating and question asking techniques, are shaped by this focus on personal knowledge . So too is our more modest interest in other minded practices contained in the making of curriculum materials, kits, units, displays and reports to parents and officials.

Our inquiry is shaped in such a way that we search for experiential, biographical and historical interpretive constructs to account for school practices. Our interpretive movement is from personal experience and history to personal knowledge rather than from established theory and associated analytic constructs and clue structures. For instance, Hunt's (1980) notion of "teachers as theorists", and his use of personal construct theory to offer theoretical accounts of a person provides, at most, a sign to the personal in our work. These signs are what we call theoretical-practical knowledge. Likewise, Young's (1981) studies which categorize teachers' discourse and beliefs in terms of philosophic traditions is not our primary interest. Nor are studies we might envision which would characterize teachers as neo-Piagetians, neo-Skinnerians and so forth. In short we are not interested in conceptualizing teachers theoretical-practical knowledge in theoretical terms, rather we do so in practical terms.

This shaping influence of our interest in personal practical knowledge can be seen in our account of the principal's life in our research school.

BAY STREET SCHOOL[5]

Where are we? Bay Street School is a JK-8 core Inner City school in a large metropolitan board in Ontario. The school has 47 staff members and 750 students of ethnically diverse backgrounds. Approximately one-third of the students are Oriental, one-third are Portuguese, one-fifth are Black, and the remaining students are of many ethnic origins. The school receives special inner city funding and is one of five schools designated by the board as a Language Project School.

Among the many Board policies impinging on the school is the board's most high profile policy, the Race Relations Policy. Again, Bay Street School is an experimental school under this policy as defined by the Human Rights Leadership Project.

The school is developmentally alive in many other ways. Its principal is relatively new to the school and 20 teachers joined the staff in September, 1981. The new teachers were replacing teachers who had asked to leave rather than become part of the three year Language Project. As part of the Language Project mandate, the school is engaged in establishing shared decision-making mechanisms. It is trying to realize a working philosophy consistent with the principal's child and community oriented views and with the language orientation of the Language Project.

Teachers are expected to participate in the committee structure of the school; to justify a detailed curriculum plan for purposes of an observation based evaluation; to

become actively involved in the community through home visits and through participation in community events; and to always be on the alert for racial incidents both interpersonally and in print. On top of these expectations there is an almost constant demand for teachers to be involved with in-school professional development.

We have been involved on an intensive in-school basis since April, 1981. As we write, the school has just survived a crisis which threatened the job of the principal, challenged the tenets of the "developing philosophy" and caused each teacher to whom we talked to question their professional life. That's Bay Street.

A THEORETICAL EXPRESSION OF PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

Now consider the following scene, on February 19, 1982, two days after the meeting which brought the crisis to a head and which resulted in a reduction of tension. The staff is away from the school in relaxed surroundings at the city's Harbourfront for a full Professional Development Day. The teachers are seated on chairs and on, what the principal views as, comfortable floor cushions drawn up in a semi-circle. Charts depicting the aims and goals of the project school are displayed on room dividers around the room. Phil Bingham, the principal, is standing at the open end of the semi-circle beside an overhead projector and a screen as the meeting breaks up and teachers move to get their morning coffee.

Phil had just completed one and a half hours of one-way presentation, labelled by a teacher as "jug to mug", summarizing the six points of his personal philosophy, a key

element in his theoretical-practical knowledge, and how it relates to his expectations of staff working in his Project School.

We are puzzled at how it was that the teachers would sit quietly through the session with bodily attitudes perhaps best characterized by Stephanie's head-nodding confirmation. We wish to show how our conceptualization of this response in the context of Phil's presentation reveals insight into his personal imagery and its ritualistic expression.

Perhaps we can heighten the sense for the reader of the problematic tension created by our puzzlement by recollecting our own thoughts leading up to this Professional Development Day. Only days earlier, as the community issue boiled to a crisis, we counselled Phil to offer a much different agenda which would constitute a post-mortem on the crisis. He seemed to agree with its appropriateness but ultimately the crisis played almost no part in the day's proceedings. Furthermore, we had been in the school long enough to know that most teachers had seen a presentation of the Project school aims, in one form or another, and everyone had heard Phil's philosophy.

Our first thought was that he was tired. The Professional Development Day came at the end of two weeks of meetings and consultations with school staff, administrative staff and community representatives all of which culminated in the crisis meeting already noted. This had been a particularly stressful time for Phil and with the crisis behind him, being exhausted and with little time to plan something new, perhaps he had simply pulled the existing package from the shelf.

Partially this can account for his actions. Phil later confirmed in conversation with one of us that he had been

pleased to just get through the day. We could rest our account at that level but we feel that would trivialize the meaning of the situation. We have come instead to see this action as minded; as an action in which Phil both re-confirms his commitment and invites a similar re-confirmation for established staff, and extends again an offer of participation to new staff. The expression of his philosophy with its attendant re-confirmation and invitation functions, constitutes a ritual.

We believe with Jennings (1982) that ritual knowledge is more than mindless action. It is minded, in Phil's case, by an imagery constructed in important ways out of his experiences at Lundbreck Street, a school at which he was formerly principal.

But, by itself, it is not inappropriate to refer to such theoretic statements of philosophy as "pie in the sky" and if one has heard it often one could well feel exasperated. Our own reaction to Phil's philosophy when we first heard it last April was one of wonderment. One of us called it a "warm fuzzy". To the statement itself, taken out of context as it was for us on that first occasion, one can do little more than nod in agreement or shake one's head in disagreement. But if one thinks of the reciting of the philosophy as minded bodily knowledge; that there is knowledge in the ritualistic expression of the philosophy; that the ritual expresses, and, re-confirms, the personal knowledge of the speaker; and that the ritual is one way a community can participate in a common practice, then the expression of the philosophy in a Professional Development Day takes on new meaning and points to a kind of practical knowledge obtained and shared in joint action. If one also thinks of the ritual as pointing to personal knowledge we may imagine, depending on its depth, that an account of practice will entail dimensions of private life. The central story in this paper is to trace this

assertion of a philosophy through Phil's experience to his personal practical knowledge, and to show how this is expressed in reform at Bay Street school.

THE PHILOSOPHY AS RITUAL IN A RITUALISTIC CONTEXT

The Philosophy

The theoretical expression of Phil's personal knowledge in the form of a "philosophy" is easily presented due to its brevity and directness. The setting in which the philosophy is presented is considered by Phil to be contextually important. Thus, the P.D. Day introduced above is significant because it represents Phil's notion of an appropriate setting. Likewise, our rendition of this philosophy to our readers is best presented in context and we have, accordingly, chosen to make its presentation in the following paragraphs as it appeared to one of us on our field notes on the morning of the presentation. We have also presented a paragraph's follow-up to the philosophy in order that the reader obtain a sense of the significance Phil attaches to the philosophy. Our field notes show that:

> I arrived at the school about 8:50. I walked in and went down to the office.
>
> I then caught the bus down to Harbourfront. There was considerable joking about the bus going to Florida, a reference to a "spring break" trip for teachers which had, by now, gained a "reputation."
>
> When we arrived at Harbourfront and went up to the Loft, there was just some time to get coffee and so on.
>
> I sat with Ellen for the morning session.
>
> Phil started the session by saying "thank you." He had put up the overhead that said "Bay Street Today For Our Children Tomorrow." With that overhead on the screen, he drew our attention to the automobiles passing on the Gardiner Expressway. They gave the illusion of being on the roof of the building. He said something about bringing children down and getting their impressions of what they thought it looked like.
>
> He then said that he hoped that they would be

able to relax today. He made a comment about them belonging together, working together to fulfill the mandates of the Board of Education and the Ministry of Education. He said that the Bay Street staff was "here today for our children tomorrow."

He said that he had gone through what he planned to do that morning with about 300 people at Open House but that the staff had missed it.

He started out by saying that he tried to date most of his plannning and thinking on a set of guidelines. He made reference to them being "a set of fundamentals" that he took from E. C. Kelly in his book "In Defence of Youth." He said he found the book at a used book store when he was working with Hill Street (an alternative school) kids in the sixties. He started out with a blank overhead and wrote the following points on it as he discussed them. He said that the following were his fundamentals for survival:

1) the importance of other people;

2) communication;

3) in a loving relationship or atmosphere (he said they could translate loving for caring);

4) a workable concept of self;

5) having the freedom to function (which Phil says stands for responsible action and interaction);

6) creativity (having the ability and the right). He said this is what we, as teachers, are trying to do with kids.

(Each point in the philosophy is repeated as each new point is introduced so that by the time the sixth point is raised a long sentence containing the previous five points is stated.)

He said that "these fundamentals are in my mind when I work with you." He said it doesn't always work but that he does get

> satisfaction from trying to make them work. He then made an apology to those who have already heard it. (He was going to use the same overheads that he had used down in the cateferia at the Open House).
>
> He said that what he was going to present today is what "I've been working on for the past 3 years at Bay Street School" and that he "felt that things were really moving in that direction."

The philosophy could easily be ignored following a barebones reading of the six points. In the context presented here, one is inclined to query more deeply its meaning since it was obviously presented with sincerity, with a sense of personal prescription directing Phil's relationship to the staff, and it is used to orient teachers to a full day of professional development. Still, a first time hearer of the philosophy could easily miss its significance. Had we not heard Phil repeatedly refer to "my philosophy", and had we not heard it repeated in detail or in part on numerous occasions since our first interview with Phil on April 15th, 1981, at which time we were introduced to this school and to our placement within it, we would probably have dismissed it, as noted above, as a "warm fuzzy." But the philosophy is used repeatedly and it is used on those occasions when Phil is groping to give a central account of himself. He used the philosophy to introduce himself to us and us to the school; he used it when he introduced himself and the Language Project to the teachers; and he used it again when he did the same thing for the Community. It is not simply that the philosophy is trotted out to fill in space but it is used in situations where a central understanding of the man, and the school, whose "ethos" he believes he is structuring, is called for.

The Ritualized Context

The meaning conveyed upon, and by, this ritualized philosophy is a function of its assertion-context, its concrete

grounding in existing and intended school settings, and its authoritative origin in Phil's personal knowledge grounded in his experience. The various school expressions associated with the imagery are rarely seen as direct applications of the philosophy. In fact, it would be difficult to detail any direct one-to-one relationship between any activity in the school and any one of the six points in the philosophy. On the other hand, it is clear to anyone with an understanding of the meaning conveyed by the philosophy what school situations would, and would not, be in accord with it and, thereby, what situations Phil would encourage or discourage. This recognition is, of course, made possible by a conceptual understanding of Phil's personal knowledge. In the section below on the Lundbreck Street School image, we shall try to give some sense of the power and depth of Phil's personal knowledge; and in the section on the expression of personal knowledge in school environment and in our researches on reform at Bay Street School we shall outline our understanding of some of the relationships between imagery and action within the school.

The Assertion-Context: At this point we shall content ourselves by giving an account of the meaning conveyed upon the philosophy by its assertion context. We view this as being composed of two elements within the situation; its significance as an occasion for calling forth a central understanding of the man, and its physical environment. These contextual elements operate intellectually and are no mere window dressing in our effort to grasp the meaning of the philosophy.

1. Significance of the Occasion for Calling Forth a Central Understanding of the Man

The theoretical statement of the philosophy in all its parts is always, in our observation, asserted in situations where

Phil is giving an account of himself. We have never observed it in use as the basis for defending a plan or action. It does not appear in situations of dialogue or debate. Rather, it appears when Phil is before an audience. And it appears, on those occasions, when Phil deems it important that the audience understand him and what he stands for. Such a situation may be called forth by the audience, as it was in our own April 15th, 1981 interview with Phil and in the presentation to the Community; or it may appear when Phil decides that it is pedagogically important for his audience, as in his presentation at the Professional Development Day noted above and in staff meetings. The significance of these settings is easily recognized by members of the audience, and the intention to convey an important personalized conceptual message is obvious. The stage is set, therefore, for members of the audience to wonder what is "in behind" the statement and, as we have done over our time at Bay Street School, try to fill in the meaning left unsaid. The significance of the setting, therefore, leads to, and contributes to, the personal authority of the speaker.

We may take this sense of authority in its more trivial sense and simply trust ourselves to him. This, of course, is the most that can be expected for the first time hearer, as, for example, a new teacher to the school. The significance of the ritual setting serves, therefore, to bind the novice teacher to the authority of the principal. One basis for the authority, of course, rests with Phil's personal knowledge, "my philosophy". We describe this below in our section on Phil's personal-practical knowledge.

2. Physical Environment for the Theoretical Assertion of the Philosophy

Phil is careful to present his ritualized statement of the philosophy in particular surroundings. Furthermore, we shall later see that the character of the physical environment is a crucial expression of Phil's personal knowledge where he strives to create a certain kind of physical environment for the school as a whole, for visitations to the school, and for crisis Community meetings.

We had little insight into the significance of the physical environment on our first visit to Bay Street. There was a kind of shabbiness and dourness about the halls and walls, mixed with spots of brightness. The dourness has almost completely been transformed in our period of stay in the school. Returning to our field notes, the first clue to the significance of environment for Phil was evident in our April 15th, 1981 meeting in which he had said that he wanted an occasion to discuss school philosophy with the whole staff in the coming September. We had offered meeting rooms at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and he had declined in favour of the Harbourfront setting. Our notes are as follows:

> Mick said he thought more (teacher) turn-over. Phil said no - later it turns out almost all senior school staff is leaving, junior school stays the same.
>
> Discussion about Phil's philosophy. He recited 4 or 5 points, Kelly's philosophy - one had to do with being closer to the earth. Somewhere in this discussion Mick asked if teachers were in early in the fall. Phil said he did not know but would like to have time together. Mick offered O.I.S.E. facilities. They use pillow rooms at Harbourfront. They want to set up their own pillow room. Phil sketched out how he wanted to maybe have a weekend retreat so people could discuss <u>school philosophy</u>. Grace has a copy but we are welcome to see.

Readers have already seen how this April 15th plan

actually transpired on February 19th of 1982. Two things are significant about this. The first is that the reference to the comfortable and informal Harbourfront setting ten months earlier had been no mere passing remark. Phil intended it to take place and he did not want it in a formal, cold academic setting. The environment mattered.

Second, we think it is significant that our notes refer to a "discussion" of the philosophy whereas we have never heard such take place and it did not on the Harbourfront occasion. Space does not permit our fully explaining the significance of this observation. Perhaps it will suffice here to note that in either of its forms, as a six point ritualized assertion or as a rich background of personal knowledge, the philosophy is not debatable. One neither changes the six points nor modifies Phil's personal knowledge except through interaction in the dynamics of realizing the philosophy in a variety of school action-settings. Thus, it is the on-going experience of education in Bay Street that constitutes the discussion of the philosophy and not, as we are more academically inclined to think, a debate on points of logic. Lest the reader misunderstand this remark as veiled negative judgement, we wish to point out that we think the pedagogical function performed by experience for principal and teachers alike is significant. There is practical flexibility, openness, learning and personal growth through experience but it is not well characterized by criteria derived from theoretical settings. To apply the standards of seminar discussion to the "discussion" of practice is to misunderstand the phenomena in question.

Concrete Grounding of "My Philosophy" in Existing and Intended School Settings: A detailed account of the physical environment and its connection to the philosophy would constitute a paper in itself. We wish only to point out that the ritualized expression of the philosophy in a particular

physical setting contributes to the state of mind in which it is to be received; and it reflects the kind of school environment compatible with the personal knowledge behind the statement. Readers will note in the above field notes that Phil not only refers to the pillow room at Harbourfront but indicates that he would like one at Bay Street School. Phil was already proud on April 15 of the pleasant staff room that had been created from uninviting surroundings and, in a highly symbolic gesture, when we left his office to be introduced to staff he took us directly to Cynthia who was supervising the construction of a large mural. Our notes show that:

> Phil gathered together a camera to take pictures. He first of all took us to Cynthia's location where she was supervising a mural that was being prepared by some gifted kids and an artist who appears to be paid by the Board to do this. There were about a dozen kids and over half of them were Oriental.

This mural was later transferred to a prominent spot in the entrance hall and is now a focal point in the hallways. It is no accident, in our opinion, that this is the first location within the school shown to us by Phil. The construction of the mural and its intended placement on the wall was a clear-cut expression of his personal philosophy in the form of a physical environment; and it was one of the most direct ways for him to express this philosophy to us.

This expression continued on our tour which ended in our being deposited in our "homes", the library and a classroom within the school. Our notes on this part of the tour read as follows:

> We spent some time with Cynthia and the artist. Then Phil walked Mick and Cynthia to the library and me to Stephanie's room.

Phil's comments on the way:

1. new lights in senior school hallways - before a single row.

2. painted senior school hallways and lockers - lockers are always a mess.

3. no work displayed in senior school-no use of hallways for students.

4. student working at bench - Phil has insisted work be sent with the student.

5. vandalism problem with glass doors.

6. very pleased with work displayed in junior school - totally different atmosphere here according to Phil.

Phil took me to Stephanie's room. Introduced me - took two pictures - said "you look like you're set" and vanished.

Every inch of Stephanie's room is full.

Our final observation on the importance of physical environment in Phil's philosophy is to draw the reader's attention to the final line in the above field note. Cynthia and Stephanie are both "makers". They are people who fill their space with colourful displays of children's work. We did not know it at the time but our seeing Stephanie's room as "full" was the seeing of a minded product, telling in its expression of Phil's personal knowledge. The telling story for linking this observation to Stephanie's personal knowledge is currently under construction by Clandinin. So too is the significance of the distinction between minded action and the minded making of things.

PHIL'S PERSONAL PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

To begin with, we should first note that when Phil refers to "my philosophy" and on other occasions, presents it as a long six point sentence the two are not synonymous. The six

points constitute a theoretical expression of practical meaning and, as with theoretical statements which express theoretical meaning, personal theoretical statements are torn from the reality to which they refer and only partially and selectively account for it. Polyani (1958) in writing about the articulation of personal meaning draws attention to the ultimate ineffability of personal knowledge. Polyani gives examples, drawn from his earlier medical career, to show that a novice diagnostician will, even with complete physiological knowledge, combined with diagnostic rules, be unable to make sense of a set of symptoms. With repeated tutelage he gains the necessary diagnostic expertise; but he still cannot account for it in a scientific way that would permit him to convey the skill to other novices. Polyani utilizes the notion of "subsidiary awareness" as a concept to account for the submersion of telling instance and detail below the level of consciousness in the interests of the focal attention aimed at some end such as a diagnosis. If, in fact, one were to pay attention to the subsidiary awareness focal attention would be lost, a characteristic feature frequently noticed in novice doctoral students in their efforts to define a problem. The ritualized expression of the philosophy is, therefore, little other than a modest sign pointing to a rich content of personal knowledge, most of which is unavailable to Phil for purposes of verbal expression and is what he refers to as "his philosophy" and, in its total expression, the school "ethos."

We would not go so far as Polyani and label this subsidiary awareness as wholly ineffable. We propose to speak of it in terms of images, rules, principles and metaphors, specifically, in this paper the notion of the Lundbreck Street school image. On the other hand, we take it as obvious that it would be impossible for the holder of the image to recover the full range of experience the residue of which constitutes the image; and it would be further

impossible for researchers such as ourselves to wholly grasp this residue.

Thus, to understand the ritualized expression of the philosophy and its intended meaning we will focus on the personal imagery standing behind the statement. This yields, in summary, three points of interest. The first is that the meaning of the ritual is conveyed by the authority of the speaker's personal knowledge. Second, the speaker himself cannot expect to lay out a complete theoretical accounting of his personal knowledge. His theoretical practical knowledge is necessarily incomplete. We suspect that there is considerable wisdom in reducing personal knowledge to statements of theoretical practical knowledge that may be ritualized thereby serving its inviting and re-confirmation functions described below. Third, the researcher, through tracing biographical and historical elements in the speaker's experience, can partially reconstruct a telling understanding of personal knowledge.

EXPERIENCE TO IMAGE

Epistemological Order Vs. Methodological Order

The philosophy in both its ritualized theoretical expression and in its personal expression as "my philosophy" is grounded in experience. Methodologically, the relationship between the two appears somewhat different than it does epistimologically since we reconstruct personal knowledge through the links between its expression and personal knowledge which are provided by accounts of experience. We move from expressions of personal knowledge to personal knowledge through experience when, for the agent, experience suffuses and creates both. Thus, the order in which we present our account may leave the reader with a false impression of the relationship among the elements we wish to portray. We have begun with theoretical practical knowledge

and various minded expressions in the school as represented by the P.D. Day and our tour through the school and we make a transition to personal knowledge. This is not the epistemological order which we wish to reconstruct; it is merely our methodological order.

Phil's Reference to Experience

Phil had been under fire ever since we entered the school and the crisis meeting referred to earlier had a precursor several months earlier in June. In a conversation with Phil on June 4th, following a series of events which had led to a Community meeting with obvious threats to Phil's job and to the direction in which the school was going, Phil pointed out that he had been through it before. We frequently wondered how he coped with the intense pressure he was under. Our notes provide the answer in his terms: he had experienced it before at Lundbreck Street school and he had been successful. According to our notes:

> He said that he was very tired but that he had managed to sleep before the meeting. He indicated that both Robert and Elizabeth (the vice-principals) had been very upset. They hadn't slept the night before and they were both "distraught." Phil said that he has been through situations before like this and his feeling is that he doesn't mind if he fails, he wants to have the problem solved and if he is not the best one to solve it then he should go somewhere else where he will be able to solve a problem. (Or he may have said where he will be able to do something). He made some comment about his philosophy at that time and that he could be philosophical about all of this. He also said that he is only three years away from retirement but said that if they tried to make him quit, (or fire him I think he said), then he would fight.

It is interesting to note that Phil described his own handling of the current situation, and his interpretation of the contrast between himself and his vice-principals, as a function of his experience. There is a sense that doing it once makes it easier to do it the second time, the kind of

thing that we commonly refer to when we say "I have been through it". But there is more to it than that.

He sees himself as being "philosophical" about it. Again, we might imagine that this is a kind of "what-will-be-will-be" resignation, but the fact that being philosophical was connected in this conversation to his philosophy and experience makes "being philosophical" a way of living out his philosophy; it is not simply an attitude of mind such as one of resignation.

The experience that he refers to is specific; it is a reference to a similar crisis situation at Lundbreck Street school. We shall argue that "being philosophical" in the crisis constitutes a living out, with personal authority, the personal knowledge (i.e. the imagery) created as a result of that Lundbreck Street school experience. This personal knowledge, therefore, confers the personal authority that allows him to cope with confidence in the current school situation; and it is the basis for his expressed authority with his staff when the philosophy is ritualistically expressed theoretically on occasions loaded with conceptual and environmental significance.

THE LUNDBRECK STREET SCHOOL IMAGE

There are two caveats we wish to make prior to giving an account of the Lundbreck Street image. The first is that our account of it is sketchy. We have been led to a sense of its signficance by a reading of our experience in the school but we have not formally interviewed Phil nor enquired deliberately of others as to his record and reputation in Lundbreck Street school. Outside of a brief conversation during the preparation of this paper when we indicated that we saw the Lundbreck Street school experience as crucial to

his work in Bay Street School we have not discussed our interpretation with him. Indeed, our plan is to use this paper as a basis of discussion with Phil to elicit further interpretive insight into his personal knowledge and, at the same time, determine the extent to which the interpretation makes general sense to him. It may be of interest to the readers to know that he is eager to have this discussion and to use it as an opportunity for his own personal growth. Personal growth has been a theme in Phil's views on what we are doing in the school and we are drafting a separate paper on the pedagogical function of our participation within the school. One of the criteria we established for the conduct of our own research, as outlined in our proposals, was that our participation would contribute to the personal growth of participants. Lest we sound too smug on this point we hasten to add that our own sense of added insight into personal practical knowledge constitutes personal growth on our part. This growth is a direct consequence of the open invitation to participate in school affairs.

The second caveat we wish to make is, perhaps, obvious but, nevertheless, is stated as a reminder. It would be presumptuous of us to think that the personal practical knowledge of a man three years from retirement could be summarized in an account of his experience in one school. It cannot. We do think, however, that at least for Phil, and perhaps in general, personal knowledge grows and takes shape in a more or less coherent fashion. It is no mere collection of all experiences. Hence, we believe that a more thorough accounting of Phil's personal knowledge would still show that the Lundbreck Street school experience was itself a kind of nucleus, or magnet, around which significant elements in prior experience were attracted and shaped. In this sense, then, the Lundbreck Street school image reaches, like a multi-armed cephalopod, into past experience.

Components of the Image

Phil was formerly principal at Lundbreck Street school. From the point of view of logic, Bay Street and Lundbreck Street are analogous in Phil's mind. This is seen in our field notes in the statement "Phil described that it was much the same thing here." This theoretical, logical, expression of the image is, then, one of analogy. The analogy is "real" in that key comparative components are the same. Readers will be able to spot various of these in the selected field notes scattered throughout this section. The following list, in no particular order, is the set identified by us so far.

1. Community Confrontation: This item constitutes two points, the existence of community and its confronting dimension. In both schools there have been crises meetings with the community. In both schools the community is viewed as fragmented into those for and those against the school.

2. Elected Officials: In both schools an alderman or trustee played a key role in the community confrontation.

3. Parents: In both schools parents are the key agents in the community and in both schools parent-school relations are dynamic and are encouraged to be so.

4. The Press: In both schools the press is viewed as being used in the confrontation.

5. Central Administration: In both schools the central administration, local superintendents and area superintendents, play a role.

6. Program: In Lundbreck Street school an open plan replaces a traditional plan and in Bay Street something

similar occurs through the language project.

7. Students: In both schools Phil's public arguments on behalf of the school's programs are presented in terms of the children. Policies, such as the language project, are justified in a similar way.

8. Phil as Reformer: Both schools are viewed by Phil as having problems in which he sees himself as a key agent for their solution.

9. Teachers: In both schools teachers are autonomous within the framework of Phil's philosophy.

10. Vice-Principals: In both schools vice-principals are seen as being in training under Phil's guidance, i.e. "The Bingham experience."

As we prepare this paper we are struck by our sense that an acccount of these structural items, if properly developed, would each fill the pages of another paper. For instance, the notion of community and its links to concepts of race and to the implementation of the Race Relations Policy is rich in detail and would reveal insights not only into the holding of an image of community but also of how is it expressed in school affairs, through challenges and adaptions in crisis. Tracing this line of thought would reveal how the policy on race relations blends into Phil's personal knowledge contained in the Lundbreck Street school imagery and how its expression in school affairs is shaped by this personal knowledge. Likewise, there is a fascinating story to tell on the pedagogical function performed by the imagery in the education of vice-principals, the teaching staff and, indeed, participating researchers. Our listing, therefore, of the analogous components of the image greatly simplifies the meaning that we might ultimately assign to the image. It

does, however, offer a prima facie credibility to the image as a potentially powerful element of personal knowledge influencing Bay Street school practices.

Forms of the Image

It is our position that the form taken by the Lundbreck Street image in our construction is a consequence of the situations in which we see it expressed in Bay Street school. This construction of the form is, furthermore, a function of the specific aspects of Bay Street school selected by us as evidential. In this paper, we have drawn attention to the crisis and reform issues involved in the school and, hence, we view the Lundbreck Street school image as one of school reform within a context of crisis. Indeed, it is doubtlessly the case that the crisis is uppermost in our mind as we write because the events are recent. But we might just as well have focussed on the philosophy and belief system in which case the form would be more inward looking and would constitute what we might call a shape in the form of "commitment to self." We have, in fact, begun to outline our thoughts on the notion of personal knowledge as universal. The general line of argument we take, counter to many writings on the theory of the practical, is that personal knowledge subsumes situational knowledge. It has a universal dimension for the person holding the knowledge and the ultimate commitment is to that personal knowledge and not to the situation. Such a focus downplays the reform emphasis pursued in this paper.

Likewise, we might have focussed on the pedagogical relations between the principal and his staff and on the concept of "discussion" referred to earlier. We would, accordingly, have given an account of the role of personal knowledge in pedagogical, and in practical reasoning terms. Readers may well imagine other possibilities. Our purpose in drawing attention to this influence of our focus of attention

on the form of the imagery is to ensure that a reader understands the epistemological status we assign to the claims made about personal knowledge.

An Image of Reform in a Situation of Crisis

Program Change: Program change is central to the reform orientation of the Lundbreck Street school image. In a June 4th, 1981 field note, we wrote:

> He said he was involved at Lundbreck Street school where they tore down a traditional old school and in its place put up an open plan school.

The event referred to took place when there was talk in Ontario education about open plan schooling. Thus, the terminology undoubtedly reflects, in part, popular educational terminology. But it is significant that in recollecting this event that it is viewed in terms of extremes, from traditional to open plan. Lundbreck Street school was not, therefore, in Phil's mind a modest reform but constituted the "tearing down" of one educational system and replacing it with another within the school.

It is also the case that the choice of terms to describe that reform are ones that fit comfortably with Phil's view of himself as a person. He would, we think, be aghast if labelled a "traditionalist" professionally and privately. He is known, as one of the teachers said, as "a fighter", someone fighting against traditional for more forward looking things. Furthermore, his dress and manner are casual. We have never seen him in a suit. He wears sports jackets and a tie on more "formal" occasions. He has a soft, maroon, velour sweater which, in our observation, is worn on occasions when warmth and intiimacy are called for, for example, in meetings with parents and children, visiting speakers and other Professional Development Days such as the Harbourfront occasion.

He has two homes, and talks most about his Island home. The Island, in Toronto, is a short ferry boat ride away from the mainland and is the embattled home of a number of residents who commute by ferry. The Island has a strong sense of community and, like Lundbreck Street school, is under attack by political and citizens' groups in an effort to free up the space for recreational parkland use. The image, therefore, of a change to "open plan" is laden, we believe, with meaning derived from private life. There are structural and situational similarities between his public and private life which convey emotional and substantive meaning upon the Lundbreck Street image of program reform.

Program and Children's Experience: Program, for Phil, comes down to children's experience. In the following field note readers will see how Phil's concept of "promotions meetings" and the matching of students with teachers is an expression of his philosophy and how he sees this as having been established in Lundbreck Street School.

> I then asked if I would be able to sit in on a promotions meeting. Phil sees his promotion meetings as a continuation of his philosophy. He wants to match students with teachers and takes a concern with the individual student and his placement. He likes to see that these placements are flexible and that they could go on all year. He mentioned, for example, that if a placement seemed wrong on October 6th then that's when the transfer to another class should be made. He had worked out many of these promotion ideas at Lundbreck Street School. Phil saw the way it had been done as just putting all the As, Bs, Cs and Ds into different groups as being contrary to his philosophy.

The emphasis on children as the focus of program is tied to another significant experience, that of the Hill Street School (an alternative school) to which readers have already had reference in one of our field noted above. The connection between Hill Street and Lundbreck Street is noted

in the following field note. Again, the connection to the matching of teacher and student is evident.

> Mick asked if Les had been involved in the alternative schools. As it turned out, about the time that Phil was involved with Lundbreck School, he had started Hill Street. He said at that point he had been working with a Fred Beavis as one of his teachers and they had set up something close to what Hunt calls his matching models. Fred had taken the course with Hunt and recognized what Phil was trying to do as being in that mode. Anyway he gave up being principal of Hill Street School to go on with what he was doing at Lundbreck Street.

We have not explored the links between Lundbreck Street school and Hill Street but they are, apparently, close since one was given up in favour of the other. No doubt, Hill Street plays a major role in Phil's personal knowledge since this school was one of the earliest, and probably the best known, alternative school in Ontario. Our expectation is that Hill Street would constitute either another specific image in Phil's personal knowledge or a vital component of an extended view of the Lundbreck Street school image.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that Phil thinks of his view of children as the focus of attention for community crises. Likewise, the central explanation of the school's doings offered to visitors and, especially, to parents is usually done in terms of children. Reform, therefore, plays a key role since community resistance is viewed as a misunderstanding of the school's intentions relative to their children. This focus on the children as the entree, within the image, to the community crisis is seen in the following field note where the reference to "being in trouble" is in Lundbreck Street school.

> He made some comment about "being in trouble" and talked about being seen "playing marbles on the carpet." The community apparently saw him as "playing alleys" with the kids. An aspiring alderman or trustee got involved with the parents and, without Phil's knowledge, organized the parents into a huge parent meeting. Phil said that most of the people in that group were from (province X). He had received a phone call from The Telegram asking when the meeting was to be held and that was what had tipped him off. Apparently the superintendent and area superintendent attended the meeting.

The image of reform at Lundbreck Street school is particularly powerful as an image of reform in Bay Street School since the situation had the emotional tension of a crisis, and a positive resolution through the maintenance of a commitment to his personal beliefs. There is no sense in our discussions so far that he modified his purposes or outlook on children as a result of the community difficulties at Lundbreck Street school; and we have remarked on several occasions that he has not modified his views in the face of strong pressure from an important part of the community in Bay Street School. The reader may sense the significance of this point by noting that one of the key community demands on Bay Street is for more rigorous discipline of the children. Phil's response to this, and to a teacher committee concerned with hall supervision, is, in effect, not to budge. He maintains an unmoving commitment to children. In a later paper, we propose to outline more fully this expression of the philosophy and Phil's commitment to it. It is a rich story, filled with community petitions, a special study conducted on the matter out of the superintendent's office, community meetings, cabinet and staff meetings within the school, and deliberations of the hall duty committee.

The Community Conceived as Two Groups: Phil's image of success at Lundbreck Street school contains, as well, the idea of the community as divided into groups favouring, and opposing, the school's program. According to the imagery, the supportive group of parents help convince the critics that the school's program is in aid of their children. The relationship between the parental groups is seen in the following field note.

> It was about this time that Robert came into our meeting and Phil just went on with the story. There was, I guess, a small group of people who Phil called _____. The other parents in the community eventually talked down both the trustee and the parents who were complaining. That meeting had ended up with everyone talking to everyone and eventually understanding what the program at Lundbreck School was about being seen. Phil described that it was much the same thing here. He said that "perception is one thing, people want to change back to what they are safe with." He described this as the inner city dilemma; everyone has to be able to live with it, including the school. He, at that point, said something about "the damn fine job they were doing."

The expression of the "two-community" element of the image is a particularly powerful one at Bay Street School. There is a very telling drama surrounding a cabinet meeting, for example, in which people are considering ways to present the school to the trustees and to the parents. Part of the discussion revolved around ways of "getting out" school supporters on the night of the crisis meeting. Phil, while encouraging this, did so in a lukewarm and cautionary way. He confided, following the meeting, that he did not want to pit one part of the community against another thereby rupturing relations within the community. This point is of some deep significance for Phil since it was confirmed in conversation with Robert, the Vice-Principal, the next day.

Properly told, that story would reveal, we believe, that personal commitment over-rides strategy in Phil's personal knowledge. He is not prepared to go to any lengths to get his views across but gains his personal confidence from his personal practical knowledge. This is an aspect of the "personal commitment" form of the image noted in the introduction to this section.

Solutions to Crises in the Pursuit of Reform

By way of summary, we may note that Phil's sense of direction and his confidence in the face of conflict at Bay Street school reflect the combination of two key features: his personal knowledge of children and of the community; and of his Lundbreck Street school image of success. By persistent commitment to his personal knowledge of children, community critics are won over. This is done through their seeing expressions of his personal knowledge in the work of the school, and they are won over, in part, by a supportive group of parents. In this way major program reform involves students, staff and members of the community. The education of children becomes, for parents, an education in how to view their children and in the conduct of school community relations.

Personal Depth of the Image

Jennings (1952) used the notion of "depth" to point to the significance one may attach to ritual. This notion of depth is valuable in our account of personal knowledge since the imagery we describe, as derived from our accounts of professional life, is, we believe, intimately connected at its core to Phil's private life. We have not even begun to explore this dimension directly and will only hint at it here. Clandinin has begun such an account with Stephanie.

We refer the reader to our account of Phil's home on the Island. We believe his image of himself as a person; how he views his relations with others, with theory, and with the community are a part of his personal practical knowledge. The living out of the Lundbreck Street School image in Bay Street School is, in deep respects, a living out of his personal life. The image has a peculiar professional structure because it is a school image and because its components, as we listed them, are school components. But we think the shape of those components, the meaning carried by them and expressed in Bay Street School, is, in important respects, derived from private life. Likewise, we imagine that in its private expressions Phil's personal knowledge is given meaning by his professional life. To make an obvious point, if Phil retires in three years he is Phil Bingham with a lifetime of experience of which Bay Street School and Lundbreck Street school are important, recent, parts. Common sense alone would lead us to say that his retirement life would reflect, in some important and deep way, his professional life. The two are interwoven in personal knowledge.

EXPRESSIONS OF PERSONAL PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

We began this paper with the assumption that its proper conclusion would be with an account of the expressions of personal practical knowledge, i.e. the Lundbreck Street school image, in the life of Bay Street school. On the way, we have given numerous instances and illustrations of this expression and we gave an account of its expression in the school's physical environment. However, we have not formally set these expressions forth in a way that would properly complete the account. Readers will recall that we pointed out that the meaning one assigns to personal practical knowledge is conveyed in part by an account of its expression. It is not, therefore, simply that we have not

shown how personal practical knowledge is applied in practice but, rather, that we have not detailed its reflection therein for purposes of better understanding the imagery. The following foreshadows a possible outline for such an account.

We would return to the ritualistic theoretical expression of the philosophy and would give an account of its re-confirmation and invitation functions. We would give accounts of other semi-ritualized situations, such as the school cabinet and opening exercises, of problematic settings, settings of crisis, and we would give an account of the expression of the philosophy in the making of things. We would proceed to an account of the adaptations and modifications of personal knowledge as realized in different actions and products. We would end this account by drawing attention to the dynamics of the interaction of Phil's personal knowledge with others and we would draw attention to the consequences of our account of personal knowledge to the understanding of the deliberate introduction to the school of new, theoretical, knowledge in the form of board policy.

Footnotes:

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2. For readers interested in our own reasoning on this point, copies of the original proposals are available as well as two articles which set out our major arguments: Connelly, F. Michael and Elbaz, Freema. "Conceptual Bases for Curriculum Thought: A Teacher's Perspective". Considered Action for Curriculum Improvement, ASCD Yearbook, edited by Arthur W. Foshay, Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD 1980; and Connelly, F. Michael and Ben-Peretz, Miriam. "Teachers' Roles in the Using and Doing of Research and Curriculum Development". Journal of Curriculum Studies, 1980, vol. 12, no. 2, 95-107.

3. Our use of this term was triggered by Jennings' notion of "minded action" in his discussion of ritual. We are grateful to Peter McLaren, an O.I.S.E. doctoral student, for bringing this paper to our attention.

4. Our own forerunners on the study of practical knowledge sprang from Schwab's curricular writings on the practical, and the philosophical writings of Dewey, Aristotle, McKeon and others. The work has progressed through studies on deliberation and choice, decision making and now on personal-practical knowledge. See, for instance, Connelly, F. Michael. "The Functions of Curriculum Development". Interchange, Special Issue on School Innovation, Vol. 3, Nos. 2-3, (1972), pp. 161-175; Connelly, F. Michael and Diennes, Barbara. "Teacher Decision-Making and Teacher Choice in Curriculum Planning: A Case Study of Teachers' Uses of Theory", chapter in a forthcoming book on Curriculum Decision Making. Elbaz's dissertation, "The Teacher's 'Practical Knowledge': A Case Study", is a highlight in this respect. Clandinin is currently doing a dissertation focussed on teachers' personal imagery entitled "A Conceptualization of Image as a Component of Teacher Practical Knowledge."

5. To ensure the privacy of participants in this study, pseudonyms are used throughout the paper.

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